

Today's Teams

**Batley Bulldogs
v Oldham RLFC**
25th May 2008
KO 3.00pm

BATLEY BULLDOGS

1	Ian PREECE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Ollie MARNs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Kevin KING	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Danny MAUN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Jamie STOKES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Mark TOOHEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Paul MENNELL	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Luke STENCHION	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Kris LYTHE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Byron SMITH	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Kevin CROUTHERS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Tim SPEARS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Craig FARRELL	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Ash LINDSAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	Andrew BOOTHROYD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16	Anthony HENDERSON	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17	Jon SIMPSON	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SCRUMS: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24

PENALTIES: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24

OFFICIALS

Referee: T Ailbert
Touch Judges: D Griffiths
M Hawkes

OLDHAM RLFC

1	Paul O CONNOR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Marcus ST HILARE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Danny HALLIWELL	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Mick NANYN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Lucas ONYANO	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Neil RODEN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	James COYLE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Jason BOULTS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Phil JOSEPH	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Richard MERVIELL	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Tommy GOULDEN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Tommy GRUNDY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Rob ROBERTS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Simeon HOYLE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	Chris BAINS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16	Simon BALDWIN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17	Said TAMGHERT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SCRUMS: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24

PENALTIES: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24

TODAY'S ASSOCIATE SPONSORS

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TODAY'S MATCH SPONSOR



THE OFFICIAL PROGRAMME OF BATLEY BULLDOGS

B A T L E Y

BULLDOGS

Price £2.00



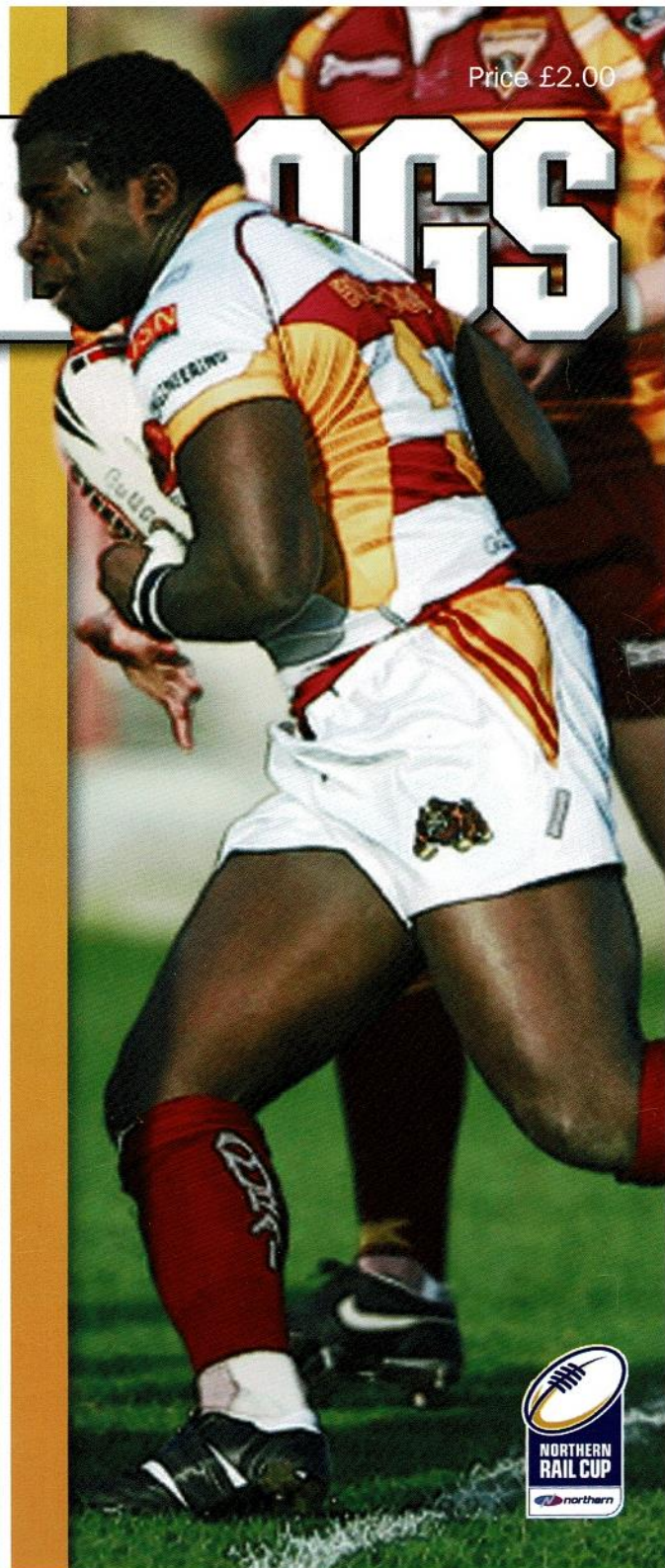
OLDHAM RLFC

Sunday 25th May 2008
KO 12.00pm
Northern Rail Cup Quarter Final

MAIN CLUB SPONSOR

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IN THE CHAIR...

Batley Bulldogs RLFC
Challenge Family Stand
Heritage Road
Mount Pleasant
Batley WF17 7NZ
Tel/Fax 01924 470062
www.batleybulldogs.co.uk

Directors:

K. Nicholas (Chairman)
A. Winner (Co. Secretary)
R. Earnshaw
J. Miller (Commercial Director)
Paul Hull

General Manager:

Paul Harrison

Major Sponsor:

Watsons Property Services

Head Coach:

Gary Thornton

Assistant Coach:

Joe Berry

Club Doctor:

Dr R. Raman

Physiotherapists:

Neville Pyper
Lee Robinson

Timekeeper:

Gordon Lofthouse

Head Groundsman:

Jim Morley

Club Historian:

L. Grailey

Website Manager:

John Miller



Welcome to our friends from Oldham for this northern Rail Cup Quarter Final and for what promises to be a tremendous Cup Tie. We are trying to go one better than Dewsbury did in the Challenge Cup and they are trying to add Batley as a scalp in knock out cup competitions.

We both had good wins last weekend and so we go into to-days game full of confidence but we need to take advantage of the home fixture having succeeded last round away at Barrow. Both teams know that a cup Final is within their reach and now realistically there are only two finals per Season we can get to and this means that the Northern Rail Cup become very important in our calendar.

This week the Cup was at St. Mary's RC School in Batley and a competition was held to design a poster for the match. The winners will be presented with prizes at to-days game. 70 children put in entries and the standard was high and so well done to everyone and again a big Thank You to our Sponsors, Northern Rail.

The kick off time today was altered to allow supporters to watch Leeds United on television and still come to the game. Only time will tell whether this was a good decision or not but it was as a result of people making suggestions to us that we did this. No doubt that someone will complain saying that we should not be dictated to by football. I should add that I have no wish to watch the match as if Leeds were playing in my back garden I would draw the curtains. Huddersfield Town would be different but certainly the kick off change is not to suit the wishes of any Director, although I think that Gary is a bit of a Leeds fan.

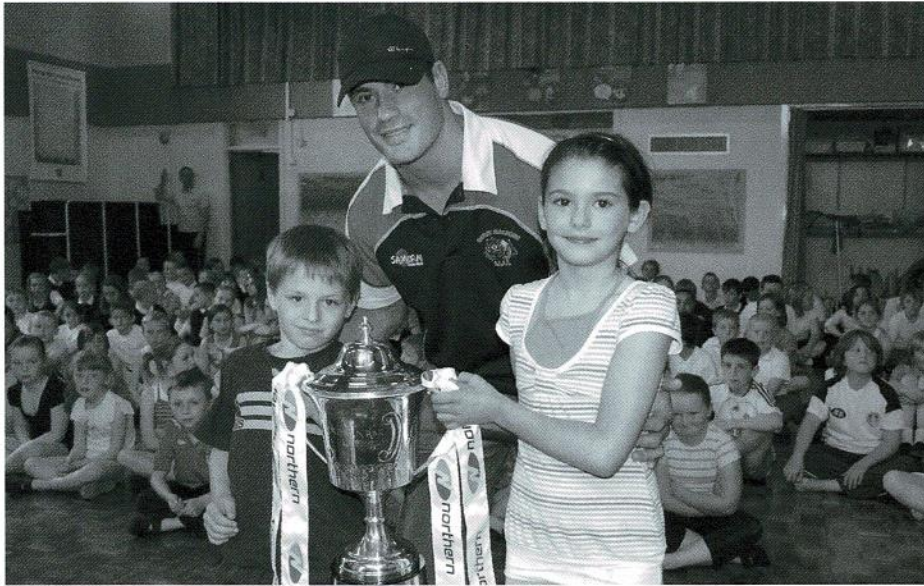
I see some criticism in letting Scott Childs go to Hunslet and I can understand peoples views but the Board and Coaching Staff felt that it was the right move for the player and the Club and only time will tell if we were right or not. We wish him well in his career. It is always difficult to let players go and justify it could be seen of criticism of the player which we have no wish to do and hopefully the player will not criticise the Club but rather than trying to justify it lets just say that we made the decision in the best interest of the player and the Club. Sometimes Directors and Coaches have to made difficult decisions but that is what we are here to do.

Our next home game is televised against Dewsbury and we want to fill the new Long Stand with kids wearing free t.shirts thanks to Sponsorship from Leyland Paints. So get the word round to get as many to the game as possible I the hope that it is as good an occasion as last Season. However, for today lets just enjoy a great cup Tie,

Enjoy the game.

Kevin.





Batley Bulldogs in conjunction with the Northern Rail have run a competition at St Mary's School in Batley to design a poster for today's game against Oldham. There will be 8 winners in total who will be presented at half time with a goody bag including a family pass to use on Northern Rail trains.

In the picture above is **Thomas Wilby (7)** and **Maia Murphy (8)** pictured with **Danny Maun**



Red Eye Design

Programme Suppliers
to the Bulldogs

Tel 01777 861262
redeyedesign@btconnect.com

View from the Coach



Welcome all today for our NRC Quarter Final tie against Oldham. This is the next game in our quest to reach a major Final for the first time since the Trans Pennine Cup in 1998. So

ten years on - who knows - this could be our year.

What a fantastic win last week. To do the double over a quality team like Whitehaven is a great achievement for us. Agreed they have not had the best of seasons so far, but I don't want to take anything away from the boys. After 3 poor performances before last week, I felt we got back to our early season form. Although it was a fairly apprehensive start in the first half, I thought we showed some great quality in the second half and came out comfortable winners in the end. that win gets us back into the top 6 in NL1 which is where we aim to stay.

Today we welcome the fans, directors, coaches and players of Oldham to the Mount. They have built a very useful looking squad with plenty of experience. Steve Deakin is a very knowledgeable

coach and has bought well in the off season and includes some real quality players. They have built an NL1 squad playing in NL2 - which is why they sit in the top 4 having only lost one game so far to Keighley. They have already beaten NL1 opposition on 3 occasions this season in Salford, Whitehaven and Dewsbury, so we know they have the pedigree to be a good side, who look favourites for promotion.

It was good to welcome back some of our injured players last week in Paul Mennell and Byron Smith, and they certainly made a difference - as did the return of Oli Marns. Hopefully we should have Jamie Stokes back soon, and Andy Jarrett continues his recovery from a broken wrist and is getting his fitness back through the reserve grade. That just leaves Francis Maloney and Bolu Fagborun - who picked up a hip injury scoring his fine try last week - on the injured list.

Thanks once again for your valued support. Please continue to get behind the boys.

Gary

VICE PRESIDENTS

David Hardwick
Bryan Cooney
Helen Littlewood
Margaret Perera
Sarah Smith
Jim Hemingway
Sam Haigh
Alison Riding
Alan Graham
Gwen Whiteley
Ken Whiteley
Jim Bell
Bert Wales
Helen Powell (Honorary)
Jim Morley

Jill Morley
David Maxey
Jonathon Ashton
Neil Fletcher
Mal Westerby
James Westerby
Colin Backhouse
Mark Backhouse
Sue Hook
Leanne Imbush
Liz Benson
Nigel Benson
Hazel Browell
John Browell
Rod Greaves

Graham Greaves
Kevin White
Mick Rush
Sue Rush
Mike Booker
Jean Booker
Barrie Howgate
Len Goodwin
Bill Blunden
Yvonne Blunden
Mavis Kerr
John McVeigh
David Earnshaw

You are invited to join our distinguished list of Vice Presidents.
For further information speak to Ron Earnshaw on 01924 470062/470704
or see him in the Boardroom office.

Another fine bunch of Bulldog's Sponsors will enjoy the best in Mount Hospitality
today in our new Boxes at the rear of the Glen Tomlinson Stand

These boxes were completed and furnished by Associate Shirt Sponsor Kerr Interiors at no
cost to the club. A massive thank you goes to Vince and his team for their efforts here as
this is yet another area we can now use to generate income to move our club even further
forward. We hope to have more developments soon.....watch this space.



KERRINTERIORS

from Concept to Completion

THE MOUNT SCENE

**The latest stats position for Season 2008
are as follows;**

Goal Kicking – The leading goal kicker is Kevin King
with 35 goals from 52 attempts (67% success rate).
Francis Maloney has landed 22 successful
conversions from 31 attempts (71% success rate).
Paul Mennell has landed 2 successful conversions
from 3 attempts (66% success rate). Adam Mitchell
has landed one goal from one attempt (100%
success rate).

The overall goal kicking success rate is 60 from 87
attempts which equates to a 69% success rate.

Try Scoring – The leading try scorer is Danny Maun
with 10 followed by Kevin King who has registered
9 touchdowns.

Points scoring – Leading the way is Kevin King
with 106 points, which equates to an average total
of 6.62 points per game.

Consecutive appearances – Mark Toohey has
appeared in 25 consecutive Batley matches.

Consecutive games scored in – Kevin King and
Bolu Fagborun have scored in 2 consecutive games.

Penalty Count – Stands at 151 penalties awarded
and 160 conceded so far.

Tries Scored – 75.

Goals Scored – 64.

Points Scored – 424.

Tries Conceded – 62.

Goals Conceded – 54.

Points Conceded – 370.

Attendances – Home attendances total 7,617 from 9
home games for an average of 846.
Home league attendances total 3,622 from 4 league
games for an average of 906.

Coaching Record – Gary Thornton and Joe Berry
formed their coaching partnership on 12.2.2006 and
from 71 games have recorded 29 wins, 2 draws and
40 defeats for a 42% success rate.

Season 2008 – 16 games have seen 9 wins, 1 draw
and 6 defeats for a 59% success rate.

Laurie

"Who let the Dogs Out?"

Details correct as at 19.5.2008.

La Belle

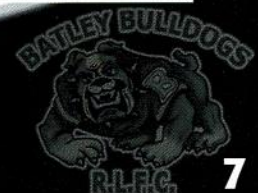
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A warm welcome



Oldham RLFC

To date Batley and Sheffield Eagles have met 24 times in competitive matches.

Batley have won 9 of these encounters and Sheffield Eagles have won 14. One game has ended in a draw. In total Batley have scored 430 points and Sheffield Eagles have scored 509 points.

Over the years several players have represented both clubs, these include; Craig Lingard, Dean Lawford, Richard Picksley, Steve Walker, Wayne Flynn, Leon Williamson, Richard Price, Steve Molloy, Jeff Wittenberg, Andy Young, Darren Summerill, Jon Bruce, Neil Kellett, Andy Rice, Chris Molyneux, Darren Robinson and Yusuf Sozi.

CHRIS BAINES (back-row): Signed on a two-year deal for 2008 and 2009 following the good impression he made on Roughyeds in the previous two seasons. Aged 23, he joined the club originally on loan from Warrington. Toured New Zealand with Great Britain Young Lions in 2003 after representing his country at youth level against Australia and France. A product of Wigan St Pat's.

SIMON BALDWIN (prop): One of the most experienced forwards in the squad, formerly with Leigh, Halifax, Sheffield, Salford, Rochdale Hornets and Whitehaven. Having ended last season at Whitehaven and having had two spells with hometown Leigh, Simon has made his seventh move in a long career to sign a one-year Roughyeds deal. Made 127 Super League appearances, mainly in the second-row, but now widely regarded as a prop.

JASON BOULTS (prop): This 24-year-old former Bradford and Halifax workhorse was a real stalwart of the Oldham pack in 2007. He played in 25 games and for much of the season he was first-choice No 8 after producing an outstanding performance in the win at Celtic Crusaders in May. A wholehearted grafter with a huge engine, Jason never takes a backward step.

MATTY BROOKS (half-back/hooker): Joined Roughyeds last season on loan from Hull KR, scoring two tries in 17 appearances and ending the campaign with a terrific show as a substitute in the

NL2 Grand Final against Featherstone at Headingley. Now a fully-fledged Oldham player on a one-year deal he will have to make the adjustment from full-time pro with Rovers to part-time footballer with Roughyeds. Turned pro for Bradford, then on to Hull KR. A native of East Hull.

DARYL CARDISS (utility back): Aged 30, this hugely experienced utility back has played for Wigan, Halifax, Warrington and Widnes. Joined Wigan from Hunslet Boys Club in 1994. Made a total of 142 Super League appearances and scored 46 tries in the elite competition. Enjoyed a fine stay at Halifax, for whom he scored 39 tries in 99 outings.

JAMES COYLE (scrum-half): Now contracted to Roughyeds until November, 2009, this talented 22-year-old joined the club from Wigan midway through last season and made an immediate impact. His 14 appearances yielded six tries, but it was the vast number of tries he made for others that underlined his real potential. Another product of Wigan St Pat's, he was a shooting star in Wigan's academy system before spending the whole of the 2006 season on loan at Widnes.

TOMMY GOULDEN (back-row): Equally at home in the second-row or at loose, 26-year-old Tommy was a key member of the Rochdale Hornets pack in 2006 and 2007, having been signed from amateur rugby in Leigh by Bobbie Goulding in 2005. Leigh born, he picked up every possible honour as an amateur, including captaincy of BARLA Great Britain, before turning pro for Rochdale.

TOMMY GRUNDY (back-row): Aged 22, Leigh-lad Tommy is one of the younger members of the Roughyeds squad. Can play equally well in any of the back-row spots as well as centre. Turned pro for Warrington as an 18-year-old, then played for Leigh and Blackpool before returning to his hometown club, Leigh, for 2006 and 2007. Joined Roughyeds on a two-year deal.

DANNY HALLIWELL (centre): One of eight new signings, 26-year-old Leigh-born Danny was on loan at Leigh, from Salford, last season and he has also worn the colours of Halifax, Warrington and Wakefield. Can play anywhere across the back division and, like many of his Oldham colleagues, has considerable Super League experience. His 43 top-flight outings comprise three for Wakefield, 10 for Wigan, 25 for Halifax and five for Leigh.

SIMEON HOYLE (hooker): Edinburgh-born Simeon is half-way through a two-year contract with Roughyeds. Aged 28, and formerly with Keighley Cougars and Halifax, he is a hooker of the old school, tough in defence but with an ability to make things happen from dummy half. In 2003 he helped Keighley to win promotion to NL1 by beating Sheffield in the NL2 Grand Final.

PHIL JOSEPH (utility): Turned pro with Huddersfield Giants and, as a teenager, played 14 Super League games for the Giants in 2004. Moved to Swinton Lions in 2005, scored 11 tries in 29 games, and was named NL2 player of the year. Suitably impressed, Hull KR signed him on a two-year deal, but after one season at Craven Park he left the Super League-bound Robins to join Halifax, from whom Oldham signed him on a two-year contract.

GARETH LANGLEY (wing): Pacy, and a good finisher, 'Gaz' joined Roughyeds prior to the 2007 season after five seasons at St Helens. He was Saints academy player of the year in 2005 and runner-up in 2006. Played at Salford as a teenager before joining his hometown club at Knowsley Road. In 30 games for Oldham last season, he scored 13 tries and kicked 35 goals for a points haul of 122.

RICHARD MERVILL (prop): Formerly with Halifax and Keighley, Richard had a superb season in his first for the Roughyeds in 2007. Walked off with two major awards at the end-of-year Awards Night and was rewarded with a two-year contract for 2008 and 2009. Suffered a broken hand in one of his early games in 2007 and was similarly unlucky in the build-up to the 2008 campaign when he dislocated an elbow in training. There will be no complaints from the fans if he bounces back this year like he did last.

MICK NANYN (centre): A points machine - one of the best goalkickers in the English game - Mick has starred for Swinton, Rochdale Hornets, Whitehaven and Widnes and has smashed club scoring records wherever he has been. He took the Widnes record off Jonathan Davies in 2006. He played 29 games for Widnes last season, scoring 28 tries and kicking 161 goals for a points haul of 434. Also has the distinction of having played in each of the last four NL1 Grand Finals, two for Whitehaven and two for Widnes.

PAUL O'CONNOR (full-back): A Great Britain Students international, Widnes-born Paul played briefly on loan for Oldham in 2006, then returned in 2007 on contract having let it be known to the club that, in the May, he would be leaving for a pre-arranged sabbatical in the southern hemisphere. He had a great first half of the season but he didn't play again for the club until he reappeared in the first pre-season friendly of 2008 at Leeds. Having signed a new two-year deal he is set fair for a long association with the Roughyeds.

LUCAS ONYANGO (wing): A real flier, aged 26, Lucas grew up in rugby union in his native Kenya. Has played for Sale Sharks, Manchester and Leigh in rugby union, and Widnes Vikings in League. He had a great season for Oldham in 2007 when he scored 18 tries in 23 outings only to damage a shoulder at the end of the year. He entered the 2008 season waiting for an operation on that shoulder and was expected to be sidelined at least until the start of the NL2 campaign at Easter.

ROB ROBERTS (back row): Joined Roughyeds in late July, 2007 and landed a match-winning drop goal at York in a 15-14 win on his debut. Played Super League with Hull, Halifax and Huddersfield and also represented several clubs in the National League. Known as 'Two Bobs' - for obvious reasons - he put his career back on track with Oldham after a difficult time at Leigh and revelled in his new responsibilities as captain.

ADAM ROBINSON (back row): A tough-as-teak young Yorkshireman, Adam played much of his early rugby at Wakefield. Aged 21 he turned down Featherstone in order to sign for the Roughyeds last year from Doncaster. A product of the Stanley Rangers amateur club in Wakefield, Adam thrives on his defensive duties but his first campaign in an Oldham shirt was cut short by a

shoulder injury on which he had an operation. He is determined to bounce back, having signed a new two-year deal.

NEIL RODEN (stand-off): Neil rejoined Oldham from Leigh in 2007 after leaving the club initially to go to Batley in 2004. In his first stint here he scored 290 points (68 tries and 18 drop goals) in 142 games over four and a half seasons. He has overtaken Mark Sibson as the 'new' club's leading all-time try scorer. Last season, he was an influential midfield organiser, playing in all 34 games and forming a more-than-useful half-back pairing in the second half of the season with his fellow Wiganer James Coyle.

LEE SANDERSON (half-back): One of the unluckiest players in the game, Lee is currently on extensive rehab after a major knee reconstruction -- and it wasn't the first time he had been under the knife. Extremely talented, and a gifted footballer and goalkicker, his father, Mark, played for Rochdale Hornets and his uncle, Ian, was a hooker at Oldham in Watersheddings days. Lee has previously played for Leigh, London, Rochdale and Barrow.

WARREN STEVENS (prop): Yet another vastly experienced performer with more than a century of Super League outings on his CV. This former Warrington and Leigh stalwart was playing with Blackpool last season on a match-to-match basis when Roughyeds boss Steve Deakin invited him to accept a more permanent arrangement with the Roughyeds. He played only a handful of games at the back end of last season, but Deaks has a load of faith in him as underlined by his new two-year contract.

MARCUS ST HILAIRE (wing/full-back): A star with Leeds Rhinos, Huddersfield Giants and Bradford Bulls, 30-year-old Marcus has joined Oldham on a two-year deal. He played 24 Super League games last season, 2007, representing Bradford 19 times on the wing, once as a substitute and four times as fullback when deputising for Michael Platt. His record speaks for itself -- 39 tries in 111 outings for Leeds; 37 tries in 74 games for Huddersfield; and 14 tries in 39 games for Bradford.

SAID TAMGHART (back row): A French international, Said has represented his country at every level, including full Test matches against Australia and New Zealand. Came under the influence of Oldham coach Steve Deakin when both were at UTC, better known now as Perpignan-based Catalans Dragons. Said was popular with fans in his first season at Oldham when he made 29 appearances, most of them coming off the bench as an impact forward.

LEE WINGFIELD (utility): Played for Great Britain at amateur level in Russia, France and Australia, but desperately unlucky with injuries since he turned pro for Oldham on a two-year deal for 2006 and 2007. In top form early last year until he broke a hand and then suffered a serious knee injury against Swinton in his first game back. Currently on rehab after an operation, but hoping to be fit to make his comeback in the next few weeks.



MEMORIES

Sunday 21st August 2005 – LHF
Healthplan Division 1 –

Oldham 32 Batley Bulldogs 34
Ht 28 – 16
Attendance 1,187

Scorers;

Batley – Gls Eaton 4 Robinson Tries –
Royston, Lythe, Richardson, Gallagher 3.

Oldham – Gls Turner 6 Tries – Johnson,
Turner, Barber, Svabic, Haughton.

Teams;

Batley;

C.Lingard, J.Stokes, S.Royston,
S.Jones, M.Sibson, N.Roden, B.Eaton,
D.Morgan, K.Lythe, D.Rourke,
M.McLoughlin, I.Marsh, D.Robinson.

Subs; W.Cartledge, T.Spears,
J.Gallagher & S.Richardson.

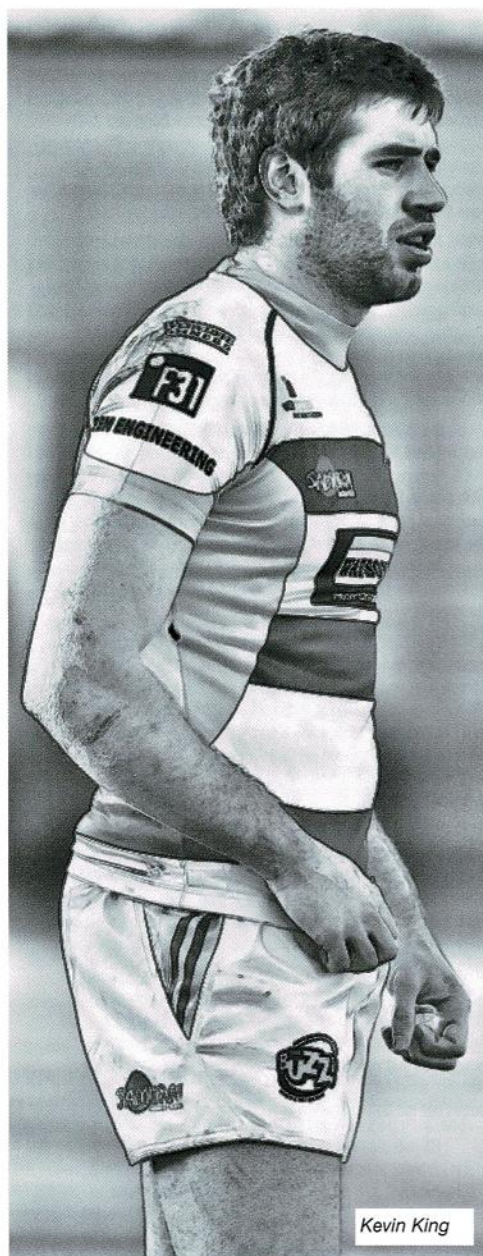
Oldham;

G.Dodd, D.Munro, A.Wilkinson,
J.Goddard, N.Johnson, M.Turner,
C.Hough, R.Bibey, G.Barber, P.Norman,
I.Hodson, T.Glassie, S.Svabic.

Subs; C.Mataora, J.Hough, S.Haughton
& A. Sharples.

Penalty Count – Oldham 8 Batley 10.

Referee – P.Taberner (Wigan).



Kevin King

CLOSE UP WITH...

Paul Mennell

Age 21
Place of birth Dewsbury
Place of residence Dewsbury
Marital status/
Family details Not Stated
Height 5 Foot 8 inches
Weight 78kg
Nickname Mennell
Preferred position Halfback / Hooker
For whom did you play your first rugby
league and at what age?
Dewsbury Moor – Age 5
Previous clubs Huddersfield Giants
Bradford Bulls
Honours gained Yorkshire
Career highlight Playing for Giants v Wigan
(Kris Radlinski Testimonial)
Career low point Any Injuries
Most respected player (Current)
Sean Long
Most respected player (Past)
Bobby Goulding
Hardest tackler
faced Not Stated
Greatest influence on career
Wendy & Ged & the late
Harry Shaw
Most memorable game
Playing for Giants v
Penrith Panthers
Do you suffer from pre - match nerves?
No

Do you prefer playing at 'The Mount' or
away from home? The Mount

Favourite ground Odsal

Worst ground Tetleys Stadium

Favourite other sports
Tennis

Greatest Playing Strength?
Passing

Occupation Full Time Student

Any other interests Palying Guitar

Favourite drink Rubicon Mango

Favourite food Lasagne

Favourite holiday spot
Sydney / Tenerife

What type of car do
you drive? Fiesta Zetec

How do you relax? Viva la Cuba with
Stokesy & John
Gallagher

Favourite musician Pete Doherty

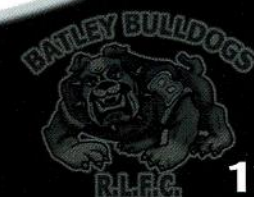
Favourite movie Anchorman

Favourite TV Shameless

Greatest dislike Selfish people

Ambitions within
the game Playregular Super
League

Life after rugby Possible PE Teacher



In The DogHouse

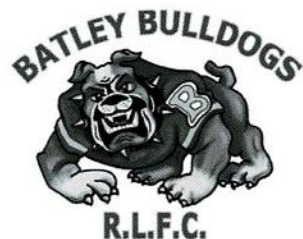
Welcome to 2008 from all here in The Doghouse. Don't forget we have in stock as good range of the new home and away replica shirts along with car flags, umbrellas and

all sorts of other Bulldogs merchandise.

We will very soon be stocking the complete range of the bulldogs fantastic new leisurewear including hoodies, polos and shorts. In fact some of them may be here today so call in and see us if you can!

The Doghouse is run by the Bulldogs Supporters Club

Call in today and ask how you can join!



Mount Pleasant, Batley

The **co-operative** membership 

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BULLDOG STATS...

Date	Opponent	Competition	R	Att	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
February																						
3.2.2008	Hunslet Hawks	Northern Rail	W	62-12	433	Preece	Stokes 2T	King G	Maun 3T	Fagborun	Maloney 10G	Mennell	StenchionT	BoothroydT	Simpson	C.Farrell	Jarrett T	Lindsay T	Henderson	Toohy	Smith	Crouthers T
10.2.2008	Dewsbury Rams	Northern Rail	W	19-18	1,169	Preece	Stokes	King	Maun T	Fagborun	Maloney 10G	Mennell	Stenchion	BoothroydT	Simpson	Crouthers	Jarrett	Lindsay T	Lythe	Smith	Henderson	Toohy
24.2.2008	Dewsbury Rams	Northern Rail	L	16-32	1,313	Preece T	Lingard	King	Maun	FagborunT	Maloney 4G	Mennell	Stenchion	BoothroydT	Simpson	Crouthers	Jarrett	Lindsay	Lythe	Smith	Henderson	Toohy
March																						
2.3.2008	Hunslet Hawks	Northern Rail	W	32-14	510	Preece 2T	Childs T	King 2G	Maun	Fagborun	Maloney 2G	Mennell T	Simpson	Lythe 2T	Henderson	C.Farrell	Spears	Lindsay	Toohy	Smith	Jarrett	Crouthers
5.3.2008	York City Knights	Northern Rail	W	40-22	413	Preece	Brown	King 6G/T	C.Farrell	FagborunT	Toohy	Mennell T	Brooke	BoothroydT	Smith	Priestley	Spears	Lindsay T	CrouthersT	Kite	Jarrett	Thewliss T
9.3.2008	East Hull	Chall Cup 3	W	42-10	493	Lingard T	Childs	King 5G/T	Maun	Preece 2T	Toohy	Mennell 2T	Stenchion	Lythe	Henderson	Murtza	Spears	C.Farrell	BoothroydT	SimpsonT	Smith	Crouthers
16.3.2008	York City Knights	Northern Rail	D	18-18	810	Preece	Childs	King G	C.Farrell	Brown	Toohy T	Maloney	StenchionT	Lythe	Smith	Jarrett	Spears	Lindsay T	BoothroydT	Simpson	Henderson	Crouthers
21.3.2008	Widnes Vikings	League 1	L	23-28	1,081	Preece	Stokes T	King T	Maun	Fagborun	Maloney 10G	Mennell	StenchionT	Lythe	Smith	Crouthers	Spears T	Lindsay	BoothroydT	Simpson	Henderson	Toohy
24.3.2008	Whitehaven	League 1	W	19-6	1,230	Preece	Stokes	King 3G	Maun	FagborunT	Maloney 10G	Mennell	Stenchion	Lythe	Smith	Crouthers	Spears	Lindsay	Jarrett	Simpson	Henderson T	Toohy
30.3.2008	Salford City Reds	League 1	L	22-48	1,207	Preece	Stokes	King 3G/2T	Maun T	Fagborun	Toohy T	Mennell	Stenchion	BoothroydT	Smith	Crouthers	Spears	C.Farrell	Colley	Simpson	Henderson	Brooke
April																						
3.4.2008	Barrow Raiders	Northern Rail Qual	W	24-20	2,523	Preece	Stokes	King 4G/T	Maun	Fagborun	Colley	Mennell	Stenchion	Lythe 2T	Smith	Brooke	Spears	C.Farrell	Lindsay	Simpson	Henderson	Toohy T
10.4.2008	Dewsbury Rams	League 1	W	29-16	2,029	Preece	Marns T	King 4G/T	Maun T	Fagborun	Maloney	Mennell T	StenchionT	Lythe	Smith	Crouthers	Spears	C.Farrell	Lindsay	Simpson	Henderson	Toohy
20.3.2008	Dewsbury Rams	Chall Cup 4	L	12-26	1,410	Preece	Marns	King T	Maun 2T	Fagborun	Colley	Mennell	Stenchion	Lythe	Smith	Crouthers	Spears	Lindsay	Brooke	Toohy	Henderson	Simpson
27.4.2008	Sheffield Eagles	League 1	L	16-24	629	Preece	Marns 2T	King	Maun T	Fagborun	Mitchell	Mennell 2G	Stenchion	Lythe	Smith	Crouthers	Spears	C.Farrell	Lindsay	Toohy	Henderson	Simpson
May																						
5.5.2008	Halifax	League 1	L	14 - 56	2,086	Preece	Childs T	King T	Maun	Fagborun T	Toohy	Mitchell G	Stenchion	Lythe	Henderson	Crouthers	Spears	C. Farrell	Lindsay	Murtza	Brooke	Simpson
18.5.2008	Whitehaven	League 1	W	36 - 20	705	Preece T	Marns	King 6G	Maun T	Fagborun T	Toohy T	Mennell	Stenchion	Lythe T	Smith	Crouthers T	Spears	C. Farrell	Lindsay	BoothroydT	Henderson	Simpson
25.5.2008	Oldham RLFC	Northern Rail QF																				
31.5.2008	Celtic Crusaders	League 1																				
June																						
5.6.2008	Dewsbury Rams	League 1 SKY TV																				
15.6.2008	Northern Rail Semi Finals																					
20.6.2008	Sheffield Eagles	League 1																				
29.6.2008	Featherstone Rov	League 1																				
July																						
6.7.2008	Northern Rail Final																					
11.7.2008	Widnes Vikings	League 1																				
20.7.2008	Leigh Centurions	League 1																				
27.7.2008	Celtic Crusaders	League 1																				
August																						
3.8.2008	Featherstone Rov	League 1																				
10.8.2008	Halifax	League 1																				
17.8.2008	Salford City Reds	League 1																				
24.8.2008	Leigh Centurions	League 1																				

PLAYER SPONSORS

Andrew Boothroyd	La Belle Beauty and Therapy
Andy Jarrett	Ron and Nellie Earnshaw
Anthony Henderson	Leyland Paints
Anthony Thewliss	Mary Hughes
Ash Lindsay	Len Goodwin
Bolu Fagboroun	Mark and Leanne Backhouse
Byron Smith	Study Centre
Craig Farrell	Batley Rock and Roll Club
Craig Lingard	The White Family
Danny Maun	The Fletcher Family
Francis Maloney	Ellnor Engineering
Ian Preece	Hopkins Family
Jamie Stokes	Brian Stenchion
John Gallagher	B.R.A
Jon Simpson	R.S.M Carriers
Kevin Crouthers	Hooley Family
Kevin King	Wessie
Kris Lythe	The Benson Family
Luke Stenchion	J D Joinery
Mark Toohey	Janet & John Virr
Nat Brown	A.R Joinery
Paul Mennel	Batley IDLC
Saqib Murtza	George and Alan Wainwright
Scott Childs	Laurie & Andrew Grailey
Steve Laurie	Gary Tingle
Steven Brooke	Mavis Mac and Jack
Tim Spears	Ken & Gwen Whiteley
Ollie Marns	George & Mary Gomersall

DEFUNCT CLUBS..

Mansfield Marksman

Mansfield Marksman came into the Rugby League in 1984, taking their name from the sponsorship of a local brewery who had a 'Marksman' lager brand. Playing initially at Field Mill (home of Mansfield Town FC since 1919) there were initial hopes that the game could be firmly established in the East Midlands. In their first season Mansfield averaged 1,202 falling to 487 in the second season. Alvin Stardust who was born in the town was the Club President.

Things initially appeared to be going well then the soccer club got greedy and upped the rent, this proved to be the beginning of the end for Mansfield and a move to Derbyshire to ground share with Alfreton Town ensued, eventually a further move to Sutton Town's Lowmoor Road ground at Kirkby-in-Ashfield occurred. With seating capacity of only 150 and a small covered area of another 300 the ground was one of the smallest to host the professional game. For 1989 - 90 season following a boardroom split Mansfield lost their brewery sponsorship and changed their name to Nottingham City.

Batley v Mansfield Marksman playing record -

Played - 10

Batley wins - 6

Mansfield Marksman Wins - 4

Batley scored - 151 points

Mansfield Marksman scored - 95 points

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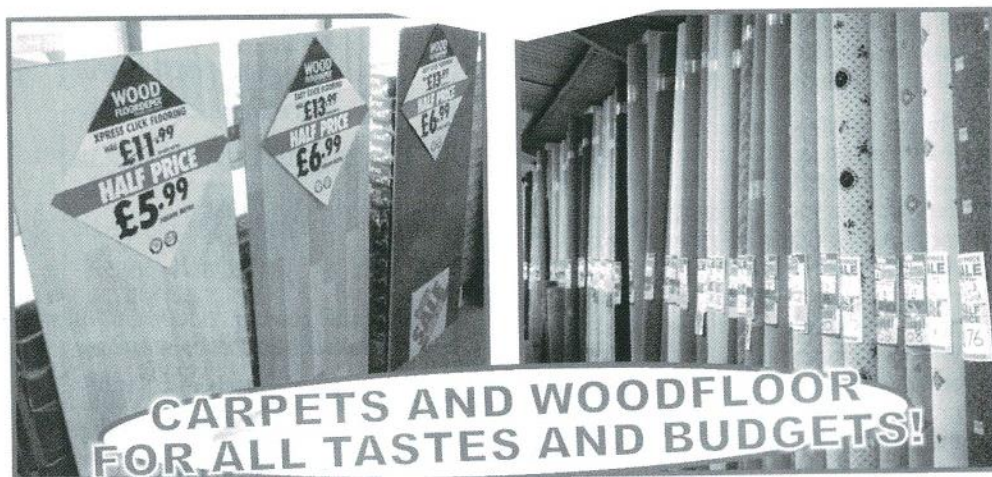
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APPEARANCES

and Scorers Season 2008

Season 2008

Player	Apps	S Apps	Goals	Drop Gls	Tries	Points
A.Boothroyd	5	3			4	16
S.Brooke	2	2				0
N.Brown	2					0
S.Childs	3				1	4
R.Colley	2	1				0
K.Crouthers	7	5			2	8
B.Fagborun	11				3	12
C.Farrell	8			1		1
J.Gallagher						0
A.Henderson	2	10			1	4
A.Jarrett	4	3			1	4
K.King	13		29		8	90
M.Kite		1				0
A.Lindsay	9	2			4	16
C.Lingard	2				1	4
K.Lythe	8	2			4	16
F.Maloney	8		22	3	2	55
O.Marns	2				1	4
D.Maun	11				8	32
P.Mennell	12				5	20
S.Murtza	1					0
I.Preece	13				5	20
N.Priestley	1					0
J.Simpson	4	8			1	4
B.Smith	8	5				0
T.Spears	10				1	4
L.Stenchion	11				4	16
J.Stokes	6				3	12
A.Thewliss		1			1	4
M.Toohy	4	9			3	12

Totals 169 52 51 4 63 358

Career Totals

Player	Apps	S Apps	Goals	Drop Gls	Tries	Points
A.Boothroyd	22	4	0	0	8	32
S.Brooke	2	2	0	0	0	0
N.Brown	2	0	0	0	0	0
S.Childs	3	0	0	0	1	4
R.Colley	9	2	0	0	1	4
K.Crouthers	7	5	0	0	2	8
B.Fagborun	11	0	0	0	3	12
C.Farrell	19	2	1	1	2	11
J.Gallagher	36	3	0	0	18	72
A.Henderson	12	30	0	0	5	20
A.Jarrett	9	8	0	0	1	4
K.King	13	0	29	0	8	90
M.Kite	0	1	0	0	0	0
A.Lindsay	38	21	0	0	22	88
C.Lingard	174	32	0	0	142	568
K.Lythe	110	18	0	0	39	156
F.Maloney	13	0	36	3	2	83
O.Marns	39	2	0	0	7	28
D.Maun	124	4	0	0	54	216
P.Mennell	12	0	0	0	5	20
S.Murtza	1	0	0	0	0	0
I.Preece	13	0	0	0	5	20
N.Priestley	1	0	0	0	0	0
J.Simpson	4	32	0	0	5	20
B.Smith	8	5	0	0	0	0
T.Spears	63	34	0	0	8	32
L.Stenchion	36	14	0	0	7	28
J.Stokes	66	1	0	0	35	140
A.Thewliss	0	6	0	0	1	4
M.Toohy	104	35	0	1	33	133

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FLASHBACK

Rolling back the years - 1986

Top selling records of 1986 were; 'West End Girls' by the Pet Shop Boys. 'A Different Corner' by George Michael and 'Papa Don't Preach' by Madonna.

FA Cup Winners were Liverpool who beat Everton 3 - 1. Football League Champions were Liverpool.

Rugby League Challenge Cup Winners were Castleford who defeated Hull KR 15 - 14

Argentina were crowned Soccer World Champions.

Cricket County Champions were Essex.

Mount Pleasant - 1986

Batley finished 7th out of a 18 team Second Division winning 18 games from 34 played with 3 draws recorded. A club record transfer fee (at the time) was received from Leeds for Carl Gibson (£50,000) who was capped twice that season by Yorkshire against Lancashire and New Zealand (scoring a try in the 18 - 8 victory at Odsal).

Player of the Year was Paul Storey with Neil Hemingway the runner up. Coach was George Pieniazek who was replaced by Brian Lockwood.

Leading goal scorers were Simon Wilson with 37, John Jones with 23 and Henry Oulton with 20. Leading try scorers were Andy Williams with 15, Carl Gibson with 13, Neil Pickerill with 9 and Kevin James & Steve Reed with 7.

Notable appearance makers were; Russ Sowden, Ian Douglas, Derek Arnold, John Carroll, Paul Ratcliffe, Brian West, Steve Ferres and Eddie Cunningham.

Performances worthy of mention include the 41 - 22 win at Fulham, the double over Wakefield Trinity by 8 - 4 at home and 24 - 6 at Belle Vue. The 34 - 8 win at Huddersfield and the 38 - 4 home victory over Sheffield Eagles.

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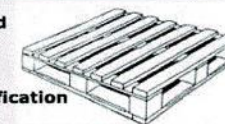
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PLAYER MILESTONES

Forthcoming Player Milestones

Kevin King requires 44 more points to total 150 for the club.

Kris Lythe requires 9 more appearances to total 140 (including 18 sub appearances) in Batley colours.

Jamie Stokes requires 5 more tries to total 40 for the club and 10 more points to total 150.

Anthony Henderson requires 5 appearances (including 32 sub appearances) to total 50 for the club.

Ollie Marns requires 7 more appearances (including 2 sub appearances) to total 50 in Batley colours.

Ash Lindsay requires 8 more appearances (including 24 sub appearances) to total 70 for Batley and 8 more tries to reach 30 for the club.

Jon Simpson requires 11 more appearances (including 35 sub appearances) to total 50 for the club.

Mark Toohey requires 8 more appearances (including 36 sub appearances) to total 150 for Batley.

OVERSEAS PLAYERS

Chris McWilliam

Australian prop forward Chris arrived at Batley via Keighley Cougars for the 1994 – 5 Season and stayed until Season 2000 – 1. His whole hearted rugged style was admired by the Batley faithful who soon regarded him as a crowd favourite.

Probably the highlight of Chris' Batley career was the try he scored in the famous 22 – 22 draw with St Helens in the Regal Trophy Third Round Tie at Mount Pleasant on 18th December 1994, when despite 3 Saints defenders clinging to him he forced his way over the line to put us back in the lead.

Appearances – 124

Sub Appearances – 6

Drop Goals – 1

Tries – 14

Points – 57

Player's Player of the Year 1994 – 5

Player of the Year – 1998

Player of the Year – 1999



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CLUB RECORDS

Batley R.L.F.C. Club Records 1895 to the Present Day.

RECORD ATTENDANCE

23,989 v. Leeds (Home) 14.3.1925. (Gate receipts £1,693.11s. 3d).

RECORD WIN

82 - 4 Home - v. London Skolars 23. 2. 2003.
64 - 0 Away - v. Nottingham City 10.11.1991.

RECORD DEFEAT

2 - 70 Home - v. Leigh 24.11.1985.
9 - 78 Away - v. Wakefield Trinity 26.8.1967.
14 - 78 v. St Helens (Carnegie Chall Cup R4) 30.3.2007

GOALS

GAME - Simon Wilson (13) v. Leigh 26. 3. 1995.
SEASON - Barry Eaton (146) (Inc two Drop Goals) - Season 2004.
CAREER - Wharton Peers Davies (458) - 1896 - 1912.

TRIES

GAME - Joe Oakland (5) v. Bramley (H) 19. 12. 1908.
Tommy Brannan (5) v. Swinton (H) 17. 3. 1920
J. Wale (5) v. Bramley (H) 4.12. 1926
J. Wale (5) v. Cottingham (H) R.L.Cup 1st Round 12. 2.1927.
Tommy Oldroyd (5) v. Highfield (A) 6. 3.1994.
SEASON - Jack Tindall (29) Season 1912 - 13.
Craig Lingard (28 Season 2001 - 02 - (Post War Tries In a Season).

CAREER - Craig Lingard (141) 1999 - Current

POINTS

GAME - Simon Wilson (30) v. Leigh (H) 6. 3. 1995
SEASON - Richard Price (308) Season 1997.
CAREER - Wharton Peers Davies (1288) Season 1896 - 1912.
APPEARANCES
SEASON - John Etty (44) Season 1950-51.
CONSECUTIVE - Richard Price (103) From 16.6.1996 to 5.3.2000.
CAREER - Wharton Peers Davies (448) Season 1896 - 1912.

CONSECUTIVE PLAYING & SCORING (INDIVIDUAL)

Barry Eaton (70 games) 19.1.2003 - 13.3.2005.
INDIVIDUAL CLUB HONOUR - Richard Price played and scored in every first team game in season 1998. (23 games)
Barry Eaton played and scored in every first team game in Season 2002-03. (35 games) & Season 2004 (30 games)
Barry Eaton equalled the record for the fastest century of goals from the start of a season - 17 games (1.2.2004-30.5.2004).

WORLD RECORD - Barry Eaton established a new world record by landing 38 consecutive successful goal kicks between 29. 6. 2003 and 24. 8. 2003.

REPRESENTATIVE HONOURS

GREAT BRITAIN

Frank Gallagher 1922 - 26, Joe Oliver 1928 - 29, Norman Field 1963 - 64, Carl Gibson 1985 - 86.

GREAT BRITAIN TOURISTS

Frank Gallagher 1924, Joe Oliver 1928.

ENGLAND

Fred Hill 1909, George Davidge 1924, Frank Gallagher 1923 - 27,

Joe Oliver 1928, George Brown 1945, Bill Hudson 1946 - 47, John Etty 1946 - 47 (Reserve to travel v. France), Bill Riches 1946 - 47 (Reserve to travel v. France), George Palmer 1950 - 51.

ENGLAND UNDER 24'S

Stan Gittins 1969 v. France

ENGLAND UNDER 21'S

Peter Bateson 1953-54, Gary Graham 1953-54.

IRELAND

Martin McLoughlin v. England 7.11.2004 & v. Russia 22.10.2006.

SCOTLAND

Joe Berry v. Ireland 26. 10. 2003 & v. France 9.11.2003.
Nathan Graham v. Wales 24.10.2004 & v. Ireland 29.10.2004.
Iain Marsh v. Wales 16.10.2005 & v. Ireland 23.10.2005.

WALES

Will.T. Davies 1909, F.Willis 1921, Bryn Williams 1921-22, Harry Rees 1923-25, Ike. J. Fowler 1926.

OTHER NATIONALITIES

F.Willis 1921, Bryn Williams 1921, Ike. J. Fowler 1926.

BRITISH EMPIRE

John Etty 1950-51.

NATIONAL LEAGUE ONE REPRESENTATIVE MATCH

Andy Spink - 2. 11. 2003 v. New Zealand 'A' (At Leigh).

YORKSHIRE APPEARANCES (POST WAR)

Bill Riches 1946-52, Bill Hudson 1946-47, Sam Hargreaves 1946-47, Don Burnell 1947-48, John Etty 1947-50, Norman Field 1963-64, Phil Doyle 1969-70, Jim Naylor 1972-73, Carl Gibson 1985-86.

CLUB HONOURS

R.L.CHALLENGE CUP WINNERS - 1896-97, 1897-98 & 1900-01.

YORKSHIRE CUP WINNERS - 1912-13.

YORKSHIRE CUP RUNNERS UP - 1909-10, 1922-23, 1924-25 & 1952-53.

YORKSHIRE RUGBY UNION CUP WINNERS - 1884-85.

YORKSHIRE RUGBY UNION CUP RUNNERS UP - 1892-93.

YORKSHIRE SENIOR CUP RUNNERS UP ('A' TEAM) - 1981-82.

RUGBY LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP WINNERS - 1923-24.

TRANS PENNINE CUP WINNERS - 1998.

DIVISION 2 PROMOTION - 1998.

STONES BITTER CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION 2 RUNNERS UP - 1994-95.

YORKSHIRE LEAGUE WINNERS - 1898-99 & 1923-24.

YORKSHIRE LEAGUE RUNNERS UP - 1899-1900, 1908-09, 1921-22 & 1925-26.

ALLIANCE DIVISION 2 EAST CHAMPIONS ('A' TEAM) - 1991-92.

ALLIANCE DIVISION 2 CUP RUNNERS UP ('A' TEAM) - 1991-92.

ALLIANCE CUP RUNNERS UP ('A' TEAM) (26.9.98) - 1998.

ALLIANCE UNDER 21 SPRING CUP RUNNERS UP ('A' TEAM) (8.5.2002) 2002.

LHF NATIONAL LEAGUE ONE QUALIFYING GRAND FINAL WINNERS (9.10.2005) 2005.



Dreaming of Blackpool

By GARETH WALKER of Rugby Leaguer & League Express

THE Northern Rail Cup pulls into the quarter-final stage of its journey this weekend, with eight clubs still dreaming of making the Bloomfield Road final on Sunday July 6.

The competition has really picked up in the closing rounds of recent seasons, and there's no reason why this year should be any different.

First up, in a match that may have taken place by the time you read this, is Featherstone Rovers at home to Salford City Reds in the Thursday night televised game.

The fact that Sky are screening the competition this year should give it added credence – and the game at the Chris Moyses Stadium promises to be a cracker.

Salford remain competition favourites, and although they are still undefeated in Co-operative National League One, they are certainly not brushing teams aside on a weekly basis.

Featherstone and their coach Dave Hobbs are keen to make a better impression in front of the cameras following televised defeats to Sheffield and Celtic – and they have the ability to push the Reds close.

Then on Friday, two National League Two clubs meet at Spotland, where Rochdale Hornets host Doncaster.

Hornets are hardly in fine form at present after successive defeats to Hunslet and Barrow, and they will start as outsiders against the Dons.

But Bobbie Goulding's side are certainly capable of providing an upset, and his battle of wits against former teammate Ellery Hanley should be fascinating.

Hanley's team lost for the first time in NL2 last Friday at Workington, and will be keen to make amends.

On Saturday, in many people's pick of the last eight matches, Widnes travel to Wales to face an in-form Crusaders side.

John Dixon's team were perhaps a touch unfortunate not to get more than a bonus point out of their recent trip to Salford, where they lost 24-22 after leading 12-0 early on.

And they have shown that they are capable of beating the leading NL1 teams with recent victories over Halifax – in this competition – and Widnes themselves at the Stobart Stadium.

But Steve McCormack's Vikings will be keen to make amends, and as Northern Rail Cup holders, have as much incentive as anyone to win this competition.

Then finally on Sunday, in a game brought forward to noon, Batley Bulldogs take on Oldham at Mount Pleasant.

Oldham have already shown an appetite for cup upsets this year, having beaten Salford and Whitehaven in the NRC and thrashing Dewsbury on their own ground in the Carnegie Challenge Cup.

But they will come up against a Bulldogs team keen to make the most of this opportunity for a place in the National League limelight.

The game should provide the perfect finale to a fascinating few days of quarter-final matches.

HOW refreshing it was to meet Super League's six full time referees recently.

I was down at the match officials HQ at Leeds Met University on the kind invitation of Stuart Cummings, getting the referees' views (for once) on the state of our game. And I'd like to say a public thank you to Messrs. Ganson, Smith, Bentham, Klein, Thaler and Silverwood, firstly for their time and willingness to talk and, secondly, for not picking on the poor journo too much – after all, they get enough stick off us.

I'd met a couple of the guys before but only briefly, so it was a pleasant experience to spend the day with them and see what they get up to now that they're full time and all.

The fact that the six of them spend their week in each other's pockets seems to be doing them good. There's a good rapport there, from what I saw – plenty of the banter you'd find in any Super League dressing room. I suppose you need a sense of humour doing what they do.

More than that, there's a good team ethic and, as Stuart Cummings calls it, a "peer pressure" to get things right so they don't let each other down as much as let themselves down. It was a valuable experience taking in the referees' point of view and I reckon from now on, when I'm thinking of ripping into an official after an error, I may just think back and remember that, at the end of the day, these guys are only human and, inevitably, they're going to make mistakes like the rest of us.

So it's an interesting quirk of our game, then, that we stick by this old saying 'the referee should be anonymous'. You can take that two ways. One, if you don't notice a referee in a game then it's likely to have been a good one. Two, that the only time we should see or hear from referees is when they're out there on the field during a match. But, given my experience, maybe we need a rethink on the second one. We never see referees on Boots n' All or the Super League Show; we never see them come out post-match on TV and explain their decisions and only once in a blue moon do we hear them on local radio phone-ins.

I understand the reasons given for that – that they don't want to be dragged into the controversies of our game. But then I reckon if we saw and heard from them now and again then maybe we'd understand them better; warm to them even?

Or is it just easier to keep them at arm's length, safe in the knowledge that when things go wrong for us we can use them as an easy excuse? And no one will care.



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